

# CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH Weekly Bulletin



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GUY P. JONES  
EDITOR

## Fish That Fight Mosquitoes.

### RADIO TALK No. 6.

One of the most effective weapons in the warfare that health departments are waging against mosquitoes and malaria is a small fish, a top-minnow, with the scientific name of *Gambusia affinis*. This minnow feeds almost entirely upon the eggs and young of the mosquito. It is only one or two inches long, but, regardless of its small size, each fish is able to consume more than 100 mosquito larvæ every day.

There is one point of resemblance between this tiny fish and the whale. Like the whale, the *Gambusia affinis* gives birth to live young, and during the breeding season, from April to October, a single female will produce from 6 to 8 broods of 40 young each.

Two years ago the California State Board of Health introduced six hundred of these small fish into the state, and it is estimated that these six hundred have increased now to at least fifteen million. The state maintains sixteen hatcheries for these fish and small colonies have been planted in almost every section of California where mosquitoes and malaria are exceptionally prevalent.

The use of mosquito-fish is not the only method by which these insects are combatted. Drainage or filling of pools, ditches or slowly moving streams where

mosquitoes breed is the most effective way of exterminating them. The oiling of breeding pools is an important method wherever drainage can not be done conveniently. Mosquito fish are used successfully wherever drainage or oiling can not be applied easily. These constitute the chief methods of control.

It is only the female of a certain species of mosquito that transmits malaria, and this species is found in the interior region of the Pacific Coast. This type of mosquito is not found along the immediate coast where the salt-marsh mosquito prevails. The salt-marsh mosquito is particularly voracious and, as a tormentor on a summer evening, has no rival. This type of mosquito, however, can be controlled.

The top-minnow is a fresh-water fish and is of no value in the warfare against the salt-marsh mosquito. It is chiefly as a destroyer of the malaria-bearing mosquito that the top-minnow is used. This tiny fish, therefore, is of great importance to the public health, for malaria is one of the oldest and most devastating of all diseases that affect mankind. Any agency that is useful in preventing disease and promoting health is entitled to tribute. For this reason, the top-minnow deserves respect.

Whenever those who may be "listening in" see one of these little "shiners" in a shallow pool they may know that this tiny fish is a big factor in the prevention of malaria and is accomplishing much in making the world a better place in which to live.



### Mental Disease More Generally Recognized.

The steady and continued increase in the population of state hospitals has caused many people to believe that mental diseases are increasing in prevalence. Dr. John A. Reily, medical superintendent of the Patton State Hospital, takes a more optimistic view of the situation, however. He believes that mental disease is more generally recognized as a disease rather than a distinct obsession, and that, as a result, more cases that may be amenable to treatment are brought under clinical and institutional care. Dr. Reily expresses his convictions in a recent address, "Whither Are We Going," reprinted here in part:

"Because of the increase in the population of our state hospitals for insane there is an opinion prevalent in the public mind that the human race is deteriorating mentally. On the contrary there are many reasons to believe that the opposite condition obtains. The principal reason for the increase in the number of patients committed to institutions is largely due to the fact that people are coming more and more to look upon insanity as a diseased condition requiring treatment, and many cases who would formerly remain out of hospitals are now being committed to our institutions for care and treatment. This leaves the impression that there are more people falling under the spell of mental disorder.

"Through mental *clinics*, mental hygiene societies, etc., a great deal of worth-while work is being done to assist those who have a grave hereditary tendency to successfully pass through the periods of great stress which result in their ultimate mental upset. We have learned that it is no more a disgrace to be ill mentally than it is to be ill physically. When you stop to consider the very delicate mechanism of the human brain the great wonder is that a much larger number of us do not fall a victim to mental disease.

"Having taught the public that mental disorders can be discussed without offense we are able to approach this subject with those who may be near a mental upset and advise them how to avoid the ultimate break. Many cases coming before our mental clinics profit by such counsel and advice; likewise, many patients who come under the supervision of our numerous mental specialists. Undoubtedly human life is becoming more and more complex and consequently fraught with periods of

greater stress, and inasmuch as stress is usually the final exciting cause in numerous cases of insanity it would be little wonder if we had greater prevalence of mental disorder, even in the face of an improved standard of mentality among the race generally.

"While there are still many discouraging aspects to our mental development there are on every hand numerous evidences of greater mental achievement of the race, and what applies to the race as a whole likewise reflects credit upon the individual. Take, for instance, the wonderful discoveries and inventions of recent years, the remarkable developments in the field of chemistry and medicine, the submarine, the aeroplane and the radio. These achievements are not the result of a race deteriorated mentally. On the contrary these, and numerous similar discoveries and inventions of recent years, should convince the most pessimistic mind that the human race is making a very definite mental development.

"We can not escape the fact that we are yet poor frail creatures of destiny, far from that state of mental, moral and physical perfection which we all hope to achieve ultimately but to credit our frailties to a state of racial decadence is to doubt the omnipotence of the Creator of man and the ever present guiding hand of Providence. There can be no retrograde in human development mentally, morally or physically."



### Winners Announced in Tuberculosis Essay Contest.

A tuberculosis institute for students in San Francisco schools of nursing was held last December under the auspices of the Bureau of Registration of Nurses of the California State Board of Health and the San Francisco Tuberculosis Association. At that time the association offered a first and second prize for the best essays submitted. Thirty-one students contributed. The first prize was won by Miss Verna Hardin of the Franklin Hospital, whose essay was entitled, "The Life of Trudeau." The second prize was won by Miss Genevieve Meherin of the Mount Zion Hospital. The subject of her essay was "The Life of Pasteur." Many of the other essays submitted were excellent, showing originality in the presentation of subject matter and appreciation of public health. Nearly all of these papers emphasized the fact, however, that students have little or no opportunity to get any practical experience in the actual care of the tuberculous.



### San Joaquin Health District to Stay.

The *Stockton Record* has published the following editorial upon the recent decision of the State Supreme Court upholding the validity of the local health district act.

"The long awaited decision of the California Supreme Court upholding the validity of the formation of the San Joaquin health district comes as a complete victory for those public spirited men and women who determine to put greater efficiency and service into the administration of public health affairs in San Joaquin County. The law under which the district was formed, was enacted by the state legislature several years ago for the benefit of San Francisco and Los Angeles but it remained a dead letter on the statute books until San Joaquin elected to take advantage of it. This county has pioneered the way by securing an expert of national reputation to organize the first health district of its kind in the United States. The administration of public health service throughout the county and in each of the incorporated cities has been centralized, reducing the overhead expense experienced when each municipality maintained its own department. Duplication and passing the buck have been eliminated and service that was previously enjoyed only by populous centers has been carried to every part of the district under the new order of things. Specialists came here from afar to study the San Joaquin system even while its legality was under fire and while its complete efficiency was interfered with by withdrawal of public funds. Now that the district is to be permitted to function without hindrance or embarrassment we may expect it to show increased efficiency and to become patterned after far and wide.

To all those of the San Joaquin local health district who have carried on under difficulties, especially to the loyal staff members who have remained at their posts on part salary advanced by banks, business houses, civic organizations, service clubs and private individuals, the thanks of the entire community is due."



### More Room Provided For Nation's Lepers.

The first of the additional buildings provided by Congressional Act of February 20, 1923, to enlarge the

National Leper Home at Carville, Louisiana, have been completed and twelve lepers who had been temporarily detained elsewhere were moved to Carville, April 4, according to a statement of Surgeon General Cumming of the U. S. Public Health Service.

The additional buildings, all of which are under construction, will be rapidly made available for patients in the order of their completion and it is believed that they will be fully occupied within a few months. The appropriation, amounting to \$650,000, provides additional beds for approximately 240 patients and increases the present capacity of the institution to more than 400. The home, will, however, still lack a hospital building proper for the care of the blind, crippled, tuberculous, insane and other classes of patients requiring nursing and highly specialized care. The need for a therapy building where instruction may be given in arts and crafts and other diversional employment is also felt by the patients of both sexes, who necessarily require some employment or amusement in this place where they are confined for life or until they recover.



### MORBIDITY.\*

#### Diphtheria.

198 cases of diphtheria have been reported, as follows: San Francisco 32, Los Angeles County 23, Los Angeles 40, Berkeley 8, Modesto 5, Alameda 5, Fresno 5, Sacramento 7, Long Beach 6, Oakland 17, Fillmore 7, Pittsburg 1, Stockton 2, Ventura County 1, San Jose 1, Torrance 1, Santa Clara County 4, Santa Ana 1, Mendocino County 1, Fresno County 1, Watsonville 1, San Bernardino 1, Hayward 1, Venice 2, Richmond 1, Sonoma County 1, Tuolumne County 1, Manhattan Beach 2, Pomona 3, Sacramento County 1, Alhambra 2, Santa Cruz 2, San Joaquin County 3, Hermosa 1, Merced 1, Santa Monica 1, Santa Paula 2, Fowler 1, Turlock 1, Santa Barbara 2.

#### Scarlet Fever.

147 cases of scarlet fever have been reported, as follows: San Francisco 31, Fresno 16, Pomona 6, Colusa 5, Oakland 11, Los Angeles County 12, Tulare County 6, Pasadena 5, Humboldt County 2, Eureka 1, Corona 2, Glendale 1, Sacramento 2, San Bernardino County 1, Calexico 2, Manhattan Beach 2, Long Beach 1, Lake County 3, Monrovia 1, Huntington Park 1, San Jose 3, Compton 1, Chico 2, Alameda 1, Santa Clara County 1, Riverside 3, Fullerton 1, Santa Ana 1, Napa 2, Fresno County 3, Visalia 2, Bakersfield 1, Napa County 2, Orange County 3, Patterson 1, Richmond 1, Contra Costa County 1, Venice 1, Porterville 1, Reedley 1, Santa Barbara 4.

#### Measles.

979 cases of measles have been reported, as follows: San Francisco 41, Los Angeles County 224, Pasadena 127, Fresno 120, Alhambra 20, Whittier 20, Huntington Park 10, South Gate 6, Glendora 7, Compton 8, Hawthorne 9, San Fernando 8, Redondo Beach 7, Long Beach 49, Berkeley 31, Glendale 26, Lassen County 9,

\*From reports received on May 10th and 12th for week ending May 15th.



Stockton 7, Corona 6, Sacramento 13, Tehama County 5, Red Bluff 6, Orange County 17, Oakland 20, San Luis Obispo County 6, Placerville 5, San Jose 10, Santa Monica 11, Fresno County 13, Venice 5, Hayward 16, Siskiyou County 20, Kern County 10, Colton 9, Monrovia 2, Manhattan 1, Santa Clara County 5, San Bernardino County 4, Madera 3, San Gabriel 2, Torrance 2, Hanford 2, Yolo County 1, Lynwood 2, Palo Alto 1, Pacific Grove 1, Redding 3, Huntington Beach 4, Colusa 1, Sutter County 1, Chico 5, Pomona 2, Napa County 2, Monterey County 2, San Bernardino 3, Bakersfield 1, Dinuba 2, Tulare County 3, Alameda 2, Santa Ana 2, San Joaquin County 3, Vacaville 1, Modesto 2, Alameda County 1, Fullerton 1, Riverside 3, Merced 1, Lindsay 3, Santa Barbara 2, Perris 2.

#### Smallpox.

139 cases of smallpox have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles County 20, Huntington Beach 15, Burbank 10, Fullerton 6, Ontario 7, San Bernardino 8, Long Beach 14, Orange County 7, San Bernardino County 11, Santa Monica 3, Oakland 1, Venice 1, Vernon 1, Glendale 2, Torrance 1, El Monte 1, Pomona 4, San Fernando 2, Huntington Park 1, Santa Ana 1, Tulare County 2, Orange County 1, Fresno County 3, Hermosa 1, El Segundo 1, Stockton 2, Redondo 1, Modesto 1, Corona 1, Butte County 1, Kern County 5, Anaheim 4.

#### Typhoid Fever.

12 cases of typhoid fever have been reported, as follows: Lassen County 1, South Pasadena 1, Berkeley 1, Glenn County 1, Long Beach 1, Sacramento 1, Burlingame 1, Calexico 1, Fresno 1, Santa Ana 1, Orange County 1, Monterey County 1.

#### Whooping Cough.

45 cases of whooping cough have been reported, as follows: Fresno 6, Fresno County 5, Hayward 9, Sacramento 3, Lynwood 2, Alameda 1, Santa Ana 2, Orange 1, Dinuba 2, Ventura County 1, Berkeley 1, San Francisco 2, Pomona 2, Hermosa 1, Compton 1, Los Angeles County 2, Pasadena 1, Stockton 3.

#### Cerebrospinal Meningitis.

Sonoma County reported one case of cerebrospinal meningitis.

#### Epidemic Encephalitis.

2 cases of epidemic encephalitis have been reported as follows: San Francisco 1, Los Angeles 1.

#### Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

Lassen County reported one case of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

#### Poliomyelitis.

Los Angeles reported one case of poliomyelitis.

### COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORTS.

DISEASES.	1924				1923			
	Week ending			Reports for week ending May 10 received by May 13	Week ending			Reports for week ending May 12 received by May 15
	April 19	April 26	May 3		April 21	April 28	May 5	
Anthrax	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Cerebrospinal Meningitis	0	0	5	1	4	1	4	3
Chickenpox	409	406	409	331	298	271	272	266
Diphtheria	236	210	196	198	146	145	167	138
Dysentery (Bacillary)	2	0	2	1	3	5	1	0
Epidemic Encephalitis	6	5	2	2	3	1	2	1
Epidemic Jaundice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gonorrhoea	66	70	176	93	74	90	106	91
Influenza	18	17	21	26	124	72	461	62
Leprosy	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
Malaria	4	1	2	3	8	2	5	4
Measles	1282	1281	1110	979	1092	1132	1268	1297
Mumps	65	70	53	56	23	36	24	34
Pneumonia	64	58	161	42	96	81	59	56
Poliomyelitis	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Rabies (Human)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rocky Mt. Spotted Fever	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	224	196	234	147	163	157	173	159
Smallpox	377	318	360	139	8	21	43	15
Syphilis	105	88	194	120	87	56	77	177
Tuberculosis	215	273	184	141	240	173	136	180
Typhoid Fever	22	19	16	12	11	10	18	19
Typhus Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	42	47	34	45	192	322	257	174
Totals	3140	3060	3160	2348	2572	2566	3077	2677

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